

# 31<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature

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Session Address:  
State Capitol, Room 103  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182  
Phone: (907) 465-3719  
Fax: (907) 465-3258

Interim Address:  
1292 Sadler Way, Suite 340  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
Phone: (907) 451-2157

[www.alaskasenate.org](http://www.alaskasenate.org)

**Senator John Coghill**

September 16, 2019

Willow MDP/DEIS Comments  
c/o Racheal Jones, Project Coordinator  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
222 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Stop #13  
Anchorage, AK 99513

Re: Support for Preferred Alternative B and Module Transfer Option 1, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Willow Master Plan Development

Dear Project Coordinator Jones:

This office has reviewed the information found at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage&currentPageId=161457> and provides the following comments:

**1. I strongly support Alternative B (Module Transfer Option 1).**

- a. The Preferred Alternative B is consistent with the BLM's multi-use management in the National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska (NPR-A). In addition, this preferred alternative fits the historical purpose of NPR-A.<sup>1</sup>
- b. The Preferred Alternative B strikes a “good balance.” Alternative B has the fewest overall impacts to the surrounding environment. Human considerations are thoughtfully considered and accounted for.
- c. Likewise, the Module Transfer Option One is the alternative with fewest overall impacts. There is a proper balance between environmental concerns and responsible, economically feasible development.

<sup>1</sup> In 1923, before Alaska was a state, the area was set aside by President Harding because of the value of the petroleum potential to the Navy. See <https://www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/oil-and-gas/about/alaska/NPR-A> (as of September 12, 2019 at 1:42PM).

- d. Development of the NPR-A supports President Trump's agenda for energy dominance. Energy dominance ensures that we won't rely on foreign powers to supply this country's needs. That's good for our nation, especially as it pertains to national security.
- e. Production in the NPR-A will provide much needed royalties to the federal government.
- f. The proposed Willow facilities have the potential to serve as a western North Slope hub for future NPR-A development. An operating hub may increase the probability of further regional exploration and production. The federal treasury may further benefit, as there may be increased interest in bid amounts connected to future lease sales.
- g. Additional throughput helps the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), which is still the backbone of the state.
  - i. More throughput reduces the overall cost of transporting oil down the line. Reduced transportation costs increase the taxable value of the oil.
  - ii. In addition, increases to the taxable value of oil, along with a "more valuable, more productive" pipeline, will provide more assessed value to local boroughs upon which TAPS resides (including the Fairbanks North Star Borough). That may provide a "good benefit" to those residents.
- h. Importantly, additional throughput (from the Willow project through TAPS) should extend the life of the pipeline.
- i. Conoco Phillips has a strong, multi-decade track record for safely and responsibly developing projects and producing oil in Alaska. The company also has a strong record of building relationships and working closely with local communities on the North Slope. I anticipate that behavior will continue.

Sincerely,



Alaska State Senator John Coghill